GRASSROOTS JOURNALS

Pastures & Pastoralism
Published by The Grassroots Institute
Website: https://grassrootsjournals.org/pp

ISSN 2817-3457 | 03(2025)

M – 00544 | Research Article | Open Access

Peacebuilding Practices in Cross-Border Conflicts: The Ethiopia-Turkana Case Study

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How to cite this paper: Alemneh, A. S. (2025). Peacebuilding Practices in Cross-Border Conflicts: The Ethiopia-Turkana Case Study. *Pastures & Pastoralism, 03*, 48-65. Doi: https://doi.org/10.33002/pp0303

Received: 18 September 2024
Reviewed: 17 March 2025
Revised: 28 March 2025
Accepted: 15 April 2025
Published: 15 May 2025
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Abstract
Conflict and peace have an impact on the current and future relationship of the community. Peace is the most important need and value of the pastoral community, and conflict is destructive and unimportant to them. To build peace, various actors have participated through different approaches. Inter-state diplomacy, non-state actors' engagement, international and intergovernmental organizations' participation and the role of community-based indigenous institutions contributed to the practices of peacebuilding. However, the objective of building lasting peace is still not achieved. Particularly, the federal government of Ethiopia gives less attention to the impact of cross-border conflicts in the study area, and the Kenyan government gives much attention to the issue of conflict and peacebuilding. The environmental change, resource scarcity like water and pasture land, drought, the availability of small arms, animal raiding, and killings for revenge and heroism, cultural factors triggered the conflicts and violence. The study, therefore, concluded that using multiple approaches to peacebuilding helps to mitigate conflict and can stop violence related to resource-based conflicts. Moreover, developing peace leadership could play a vital role in the realization of peace in the area.

Keywords
Pastoralism; Agro-pastoralism; Peacebuilding; Resources; Conflict; Cross-border conflicts; Violence; Peace

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1. Introduction

Pastoralism is a livelihood mechanism and trans-human activity characterized by livestock herding and movement in the arid and semi-arid lands of East Africa. Pastoralists and agro-pastoralists move with their livestock and, in most cases, raids, livestock theft, abduction, droughts, presence of illegal arms, inaccessibility of

pasture land, water, epidemics, degradation, and negative cultural practices instigate conflict and violence. These problems need a solution through the mechanisms which enable to creation of peace and development (IGAD, 2022). The nature of cross-border pastoralist natural resource-based conflict between Kenya and Ethiopia is resource-driven. Further on, the salient triggers of conflict as politically motivated and ethnic-based for resource sharing and control. It is frequently witnessed across the border with common signs seeming inevitable due to resource scarcity and environmental degradation (Shikuku *et al.*, 2020). The sources of the conflict are complex and multilayered, and need a peaceful solution because the multilayered factors leading to conflict in the area are interconnected to the livelihood and survival of the community.

Peacebuilding processes vary depending on the context of the conflicts. Peacebuilding approaches can create an environment of positive community relationships (Karbo, 2008). Researchers classify the peacebuilding approaches into state-based and non-state-based traditional approaches (Omeje, 2008). Peacebuilding practices need the role of state, non-state actors with strategies to sustain peace in the control and utilization of resources like land, pasture, water points and water bodies. Creating peaceful utilization of these resources is vital for the survival, livelihood and development of the pastoral and semi-pastoral community. The conflict in the area is situational. Mostly, the resource use conflict is exacerbated during the dry season. This time is the time of resource shortage, and the community is always in search of these resources anywhere across the boundary of the two countries (Pavanello and Levine, 2011). Land and water, in particular, can be structural drivers of pastoralist conflict and violence (Nilsson, n.d.). Several interventions are being carried out by NGOs, international organization, intergovernmental organizations and the governments in the study area to build peace and to mitigate the conflict and violence (European Commission, 2016). The states are not the only actors in peacebuilding. It involves the participation of various non-state actors. Because the state-centered approaches of peacebuilding are unable to address conflict and violence (Turo, 2010). Community-based peacebuilding approaches are an important part of the intervention (Temsegen, 2010). Indigenous community-based approaches to peacebuilding contribute to conflict resolution and resource sharing among the pastoral community. Indigenous conflict resolutions have been recognized by the states of Kenya and Ethiopia to create conditions of sustainable inter-ethnic peace based on their peace culture, norms and values. Moreover, the intergovernmental organizations like the European Union and IGAD, NGOs and civil society development institutions could be vital for peace (IGAD, 2022).

This study argues that multiple approaches to peacebuilding are the most important mechanism to resolve cross-border resource-based conflict and to create sustainable peace between the two countries' pastoralist communities. The specific objectives of this study were:

1. to identify the underlying cause of the Kenya-Ethiopia, specifically Turkana, Kenya, hammer, Dassanech and Nyangatom cross-border resource-based pastoralist conflicts;
2. to examine the practice of peacebuilding approaches applied;
3. to show the success of the approaches adopted to resolve the conflicts.

This article will contribute to existing knowledge of peacebuilding by analyzing and investigating the peacebuilding practice in cross-border resource utilization conflicts. Based on researcher information and online sources, there is no research conducted on the practices of peacebuilding in the cross-border conflicts of the Hamer, Nyangatom and Dassanech Woreda of Ethiopia-Turkana and the Turkana-Kenya. The research is done to fill this gap and to contribute to the peacebuilding system of cross-border pastoral conflict and violence in the study area.

2. Theoretical Framework

Lederach's theory of grassroots peace-building is a comprehensive concept that encompasses, generates, and sustains the full array of processes, approaches, activities and stages needed to transform conflict toward more sustainable, peaceful relations. The peacebuilding practices need the transformation of conflict through various peacebuilding mechanisms like conflict resolution, management, negotiation, and prevention (Lederach, 1997). In addition, peacebuilding is a long-term, dynamic process which aims to address relational, structural, attitudinal, and social issues through a vast array of mechanisms that co-create an infrastructure for peace. The peace infrastructures can influence the conflict situation to create sustainable peace among or between the conflicting groups (Ramcharan, 2009). Further, local community participation, capacity-building, institutional building, relationship-building, and cross-community dialogue are also required to address the root causes of conflict and its impacts (Jeong, 2005; Lederach, 1997; Zelizer, 2013).

Peacebuilding needs the long-term commitment to establishing an infrastructure of peace across the levels of a society, community and groups that empowers the resources for reconciliation from within and maximizes the contribution from others, like from NGOs, states, international organizations, inter-governmental organizations or peace actors from abroad (Lederach, 1997). The reconciliation of polarized communities is an important step within any peacebuilding process. Reconciliation prevents, once and for all, the use of the past as the seed of renewed conflict and violence. It also consolidates peace and breaks the cycle of violence in the society (Mac Ginty & Williams, 2009).

As suggested by democratic peace theorists, democracy is the driving force of peace and economic development. Democracies do not go to war or violence; rather, they opt to work on the principle of cooperation, understanding and respect. Peace is also achievable through economic development-based cooperation (Murithi, 2008; Patapan, 2012). As part of it, the economic peace theory explained that the actors of government and civil society should cooperate economically, socially, and culturally on the ground to informants like government officials, NGOs, can ensure stability and maintain peace. Solutions must be adopted by the top and middle leadership and the grassroots (Lederach, 1997). The political peace process must be strengthened by opening up opportunities to communicate across conflict lines, understanding the interests and desires of the other party and confirming one's interests, and exploring viable alternative approaches that meet the needs of both parties. Peacebuilding initiatives include cross-cutting or inclusive relationships, such as people-to-people, business-to-business, and institution-to-institution initiatives. Economic peace theory suggests that this economic interdependence promotes peace and prevents conflict. At the macro level, economic peace involves structural reforms to create an environment for peacebuilding (Galtung, 1975). Beyond the grassroots peacebuilding UN Agenda for Peace suggested to states to conduct diplomatic negotiations and discussions for the peaceful settlement of disputes. Diplomacy as a conflict and violence resolution mechanism is taken as a theoretical framework because it is important to analyze interstate diplomatic engagement in cross-border resources-based and resource sharing conflicts.

This study, therefore, analyzed the various views in governmental based on the above stated peacebuilding theories and the UN Agenda for peace, and the economic theory of peace to attempt an explanation of cross border conflict and peacebuilding through multiple approaches and actors of peace building among Dassanech, hammer, nyangatom Woreda of Ethiopia and the turkana of Kenya community. The theoretical basis supports this study in the way that to asks questions about the practices and approaches, or mechanisms. In addition, the theories are contextually relevant, and it is compatible with positive, negative peace, and peacebuilding based on the contexts

of the conflict. Through the lenses of these theoretical approaches, in strong relation with cross border resource based conflict, and the multiple approaches or mechanisms for peacebuilding, grassroots governmental and non-governmental actors of peacebuilding are understood to occupy a place in the peacebuilding, particularly well-suited to address resource based cross border conflicts and to heal the wounds of violence.

3. Research Methodology and Methods

This research employed qualitative research methods and a multiple case study design. The research was conducted through the analysis of primary and secondary data sources. Purposive sampling was used to identify the informants, like government officials, NGOs, elders and the peace and militia officers, conflict prevention, early warning and early response experts on the Ethiopian side. Data about the part of Kenya regarding the issue of understudying is collected from the Ethiopian side and secondary sources. The researcher selected 87 individuals to participate in an interview and focus group discussions. Six focus group discussions were used for the local peace committees, the Keble peace committee community members, comprising at least 8 people in each group discussion on the Ethiopian side. The information about the Kenyan side was based on secondary data and primary data taken from Ethiopians. The researcher employed FGD, interviews, and document analysis to investigate the multiple approaches and practices of peacebuilding in cross-border resource-based and use conflicts. The purposes of all of the tools were to produce reliable data using data triangulation. The data obtained through unstructured interviews, FGDs and document analysis were organized based on themes, contents and analyzed qualitatively or inductively. In addition, the researcher used direct quotes that described the views or opinions of interviewees related to the study objectives.

4. Discussions and Findings of the Study

4.1. Causes of Cross-Border Resource-Based Conflicts

Resources like livestock, water, grazing land, flood-protected agricultural land and fish stocks are the main resources for the livelihood of local communities on both sides of the border areas. It is very significant for both the overall lives of the community (Yntiso, 2016). Water and pasture land in particular are the major resources, and the key consideration when it comes to the livelihoods of the community. Agro-pastoralists' engagement in retreat agriculture and seasonal migration to search for pasture and water with their livestock is one of the causes of conflict (Nancy, 2011). The respondents or informants also confirm the existence of seasonal migration to the boundary of Kenya, and the Kenyans also migrate to us, but most commonly, the Ethiopians ' pastoralists' mobility for pasture and water is usual in dry seasons.

Competition over resources is often fierce across borders. Conflict over access to land, water and fishing rights is common between the two countries' communities. The resource scarcity and conflict are severely exacerbated by government or state development projects of the Gibe III dam, the transformation of communal lands into large-scale irrigated cash-crop schemes for sugar cane and cotton (Sean, 2012). These projects have displaced communities from their land without compensation and reduced the amount of water available to the Dassanech, Arbore and Turkana, who are downstream from the Omo and Wiyot rivers. It may cause conflict between the upstream and downstream communities. Specifically, the absence of compensation from the government of Ethiopia to the Ethiopian pastoralists for their land is the source of grievance in the community and creates its indirect influence in cross-border mobility and conflict.

The conflicts are triggered by environmental and man-made factors like unpredictable weather conditions, environmental degradation, drought and resource pressure caused by large-scale population development projects. These issues have an influence on livelihoods and led to conflict and instability between groups competing for access to land, pasture, water and fishing areas (Yntiso, 2012).

In addition, the informants explained the conflict in the following manner:

The conflict takes the form of clan conflict as rival groups compete and fight over scarce resources like water points, cattle raiding and lakes for fishing. Some conflicts are driven by historical clan rivalries. Internal conflict can be seen between the Nyangatom and Suri, Dassanech and Nyangatom, Dassanech and Hamer, Dassanech and Turkana, Nyangatom and Turkana, Hamer and Mursi, and Hamer and Erbore over land. The internal conflicts exacerbate the external or the cross-border resource-based conflicts. When we come to the cross-border conflicts, the Hamer also fights with the Gabra community and the Turkana over fishing rights and range land. The increasing pressures on resources push the border area community to resort to violence to gain access to resources. The other causes of conflict in the study area are animal raiding as a cultural value and practice. Our culture promotes animal raiding (FGD 3, 1 and interview with the South Omo zone peace and militia office).

Photo 1: The picture above indicates the return of the looted cattle from Kenya to Ethiopia using inter-state diplomacy through the two states' police offices, particularly the South Omo zone peace and militia office with the neighboring Kenya [*Source:* District/Woreda Government Communication Affairs Office, 2023]

4.2 The Role of Various Peacebuilding Actors

4.2.1 The State as a Peacebuilding Actor

The governments of the two states are working together to mitigate the conflict, to build peace and transformation of conflict among the conflict-affected pastoralists and agro-pastoralist communities of the Dassanech, Nyangatom Woreda of Ethiopia and in the side of Kenya. As Lederach (1997) stated, peacebuilding in a conflict can be done by the state security mechanisms. For instance, the state police force, the military and the local militia can manage a conflict and violence by applying the state's early warning and response system can reduce further violence.

Different types of action are important to address these different dimensions of resource-based cross-border conflict and peacebuilding (Dida, 2008). State-led diplomacy is one of the multiple approaches to deal with cross-border conflict resolution, prevention, management and peacebuilding all in all (Scott-Villiers et al., 2011). Inter-state diplomacy is important for the reduction of conflict and violence, together with other peacebuilding approaches (Sharp, 2001). The state's security system can also contribute too for communication and conflict prevention (Ibid). The modern diplomatic mechanism largely includes non-state and state actors (Murray et.al, 2011). Public diplomacy is also another approach to cross-border conflict prevention and peace. Public diplomacy creates an opportunity for each to broaden the friendship relations between two or more countries. Along with actions at the level of traditional local and national institutions, actions on an international level through inter-governmental organizations and through other international agencies should be used to promote and pursue peace (Güleç, n.d.). All actors in the diplomatic system or mechanism share the common goal of maintaining stability, creating peace, and eradicating conflicts and violence, which can damage political relationships, hamper cross-border trade (Dida, 2008). Multiple actors working in a coordinated manner, as well as the use of multiple approaches, are essential in conflict resolution in cross-border pastoral resource-based conflict (Kimokoti et al., 2016; Rebecca, 2014).

The two states' government conducts conflict resolution through elders, conflict management through the police officers and conduct conflict prevention activities through the Woreda conflict early warning and response offices. The Dassanech, hammer and Nyangatom Woreda of Ethiopia administration work to enhance peace through established peace committees from the cattle keepers, elders, police and women. They have played a pivotal role in addressing community conflicts through the enhancement of communication understanding. The role of peace committees is primarily focused on conflict prevention and resolution. They try to communicate with the Woreda security offices to reduce conflict and violence. The Woreda governments have direct responsibilities for citizen security, peace and welfare. From the focus group discussion with the district government officials of the two sides, the study identified their roles to include working to share information and resolve conflict with the established peace committee, government bodies, elders and police officers. Even if the security officers are part there, conflicts are resolved based on the culture of the two communities. There is a weak collaboration between Kenya and Ethiopia to engage in cross cross-border peacebuilding program (FGD, 1, 3 and interview with the zonal peace and security office). In role of the state in the process of peacebuilding is working to settle disputes and conflict (Ramcharan, 2009). More or less, the government contributes to the resolution of conflict through the above-mentioned actors of peacebuilding.

As part of the governments of the two states, IGAD is also active in the border area to deal with conflict and peace. In the past, its main focus was on the collection, analysis and dissemination of conflict early warning information to the concerned bodies. It was also involved in two regional projects: (i) the Regional Pastoral Livelihoods Resilience Project (RPLRP) and (ii) the Drought Resilience Sustainable Livelihoods

Project (DRSLP), which focus on natural resource management, markets, livelihoods and disaster risk management, which contributes indirectly to conflict mitigation and peacebuilding. Despite the regional focus of these projects, the present research suggests a weak collaboration between Kenya and Ethiopia, with little evidence of joint planning and consultation.

Recently, fish represent a new livelihood for some communities living near Lake Turkana. The possibility of developing bilateral agreements between Kenya and Ethiopia may open up new options for Ethiopian pastoralists to move their herds into pastures that have the potential for additional production. Education and the opening up of wage employment opportunities for educated Nyangatom and Dassanech may provide more diverse livelihoods that will contribute to resilience (Paffenholz and Reychler, 2005; Yohannes, 2005). These promote peace and improve community relationships. The government of in collaboration with the EU, the Ethiopian Institute of Peace and the Ethiopian Pastoralist Association, tries to create awareness about the culture of peace and the way of peaceful existence.

Photo 2: The picture shows the two state police forces discussing with the two countries' communities on peacebuilding and conflict prevention [*Source*: District/Woreda Government Communication Affairs Office, 2023]

4.2.2. Non-governmental Organizations

Some NGOs are attempting to promote greater resource sharing to reduce conflict. International organizations have supported various peace efforts such as trainings, forums, peace clubs, peace radios, and peace committees, as noted by The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (2015). In the study area, except for peace committees and trainings, others are nonexistent (Interview with Woreda Conflict Prevention and Early Response Office, 2022). Non-governmental organizations like FBOs, Riam Riam Peace Network, IOM, Mercy Corps, Oxfam GB, EpaRDA, SAPCONE, that commit to the two communities' peace, help in the dissemination of information, provide training and participate in reconciliations (European Commission, 2016). They provide education in the form of training to develop the culture of peace in the community (FGD 4). Based on the theory of culture of peace, the conflicting parties develop the attitude of nonviolence and fierce determination to defend human rights, justice and human dignity, as the existence of peace in a community is expected from all members of a community. Peace will be a permanent feature of all social institutions, especially the economy, and the political scene.

In pre- and post-conflict contexts, intergovernmental organizations, and civil society or NGOs' engagement in peace and peace-related activities are the important drivers for peacebuilding (Lederach, 1997). The NGOs play an important role in advocacy to help the Woreda or districts to ensure peace and to reduce conflict. NGOs are at the cutting edge of people-centered structural peace-building diplomacy practices between the two communities. In Ethiopia, international organizations and national Civil Society Organizations have had a crucial role in establishing local peace committees. CSOs have roles in the support of the continuity of peace dialogues between the conflicting parties. They provide the skill of peacebuilding to leaders to enhance community-based peacebuilding (interview with the Zonal and Woreda Peace, Conflict Prevention and Early Response Office, 2022). There are many NGOs engaged in various activities. Specifically, 44 NGOs are working on cross-border issues. The 24 NGOs are on the Ethiopian side and 20 on the Kenyan side (European Commission, 2016). Within Ethiopia, most of their activities are focused on livelihoods and resilience, and include interventions such as rangeland management, agriculture and water.

4.2.3. Local Peace Committees in Kebeles or Small Local Administrative Units

To address cross-border conflict issues, cross-border (Ethiopia-Kenya) harmonizing committees are established to reduce conflict and violence in the study area. For the success of peacebuilding, the involvement or participation of the community is mandatory (Jeong, 2005; Lederach, 1997; Zelizer, 2013). In Dassanech, Nyangatom Woreda of Ethiopia, peace committees were established to strengthen village peace, border area peace and the Woredas as a whole. Information shared for concerned bodies to prevent violence is done by them, International organizations and national Civil Society Organizations have had a crucial role in establishing local peace committees. The Woreda or district peace committees have the mandate to resolve conflicts and to build peace. The committees meet irregularly to address any conflicts in the community and between the two communities. Conflicts are resolved, especially by tribal leaders or elders. In this regard, Ghali (1992) explains that peacebuilding consists of a wide range of activities like capacity building and reconciliation. Such peace initiatives can help the conflicting groups to fix the root causes of a conflict.

Literature also indicated that local administrators and representatives for women and youth, and elders are members of the committee. Kebele peace committees are more inclusive in establishments (IGAD, 2009). The lack of active joint-Woreda or district and cross-border peace committees hinders the timely resolution of conflicts and destructive violence that has happened between the two states. The peace committees are one of the peacebuilding structures to facilitate people-to-people diplomacy in the part of Ethiopia and the public diplomacy on the side of Kenya. To make the public diplomacy or people-to-people diplomacy, the South Omo zone government officials and the Woreda leaders play a significant role using sport as an instrument of peace.

4.2.4. The Role of Indigenous Community-Based Institutions in Cross-Border Peacebuilding

The institution of traditional leadership has its origin in ancient times when communities sharing the same beliefs and kinship were allocated land for occupation and grazing (Bennet and Murray, 1999). Conflict resolution by elders among the different tribes in Ethiopia was largely influenced by the religious ideas and used for conflict resolution based on community peace values (Bahtu, 2014). The same is true in Kenya, where customary law has existed since time immemorial and is recognized in Kenya's legal system. A large number of people who live in traditional communities subscribe to the principles of customary law and embrace the traditional court systems (Burton, 1990). For the objective of peacebuilding, customary or indigenous institutions are used to address internal and external conflicts in pastoral communities of the study area. In the traditional institutions, led by tribal elders, are engaged in conflict resolution and management. These institutions are effective in managing

conflicts within their ethnic groups, and they also sometimes play a role in resolving conflicts outside their ethnic group in cross-border conflicts. Beyond the domestic conflict resolution and peacebuilding activities, they also have a role in cross-border peacebuilding and conflict resolution. In each Woreda, there is a peace and security committee including tribal leaders or elders, which is mandated to prevent and settle conflicts in its area and also can participate in cross-border conflict resolution and prevention if they are selected by the community.

Conflict resolution was identified as the primary priority by the community on shared resources like water and land for pasture (Nyangatom, Dassanech and Hammer Woreda Conflict Prevention Officers, 2022). Community-based dialogue and conflict resolution are also required to address the root causes of conflict and its impacts (Jeong, 2005; Lederach, 1997). The local institutions were empowered to make their own decisions and learned more about conflict resolution by being part of the peace-making process supported and facilitated by NGOs like EPaRDA. Decisions by elders are easily complied with due to strong communal ties and commitment to customary rules. In Kenya, giving examples of pastoralist communities of the Pokot, Turkana, Samburu, and Marakwet, elders play a big role in solving land conflicts or disputes in villages and among the community (Meitzner Yoder, 2003). More than the modern conflict resolution system, the customary system provides better results when into comes to conflict resolution in the community (Diouf, 1990). The informants are also acknowledging the role of elders in cross-border and internal conflicts.

Photo 3: The picture shows a community discussion on resource conflict and its resolution mechanisms [*Source:* Woreda/District Government Communication Affairs, 2023]

Peacebuilding is multidimensional; the above-stated peacebuilding approaches are interconnected, and the realization of one peacebuilding approach is dependent on the other to achieve the goal of peacebuilding in the study area. One peacebuilding approach can support the other approach to achieve the overall goal of internal and cross-border peacebuilding. Reaching peace required inclusive participation and shared responsibility involving the state, civil society, and different international and local institutions.

Weak resource governance, the economic problems, population growth and environmental degradation are taken as drivers of conflict and violence in the study area. Shortage of livelihoods and socio-economic deprivation, particularly when coupled with a sense of historic marginalization, and animosity-based grievances are exacerbate the conflicts.

Figure 1: The above picture shows the approaches or frames of peacebuilding in internal cross-border pastoral conflicts and agro-pastoralist conflicts of the study area

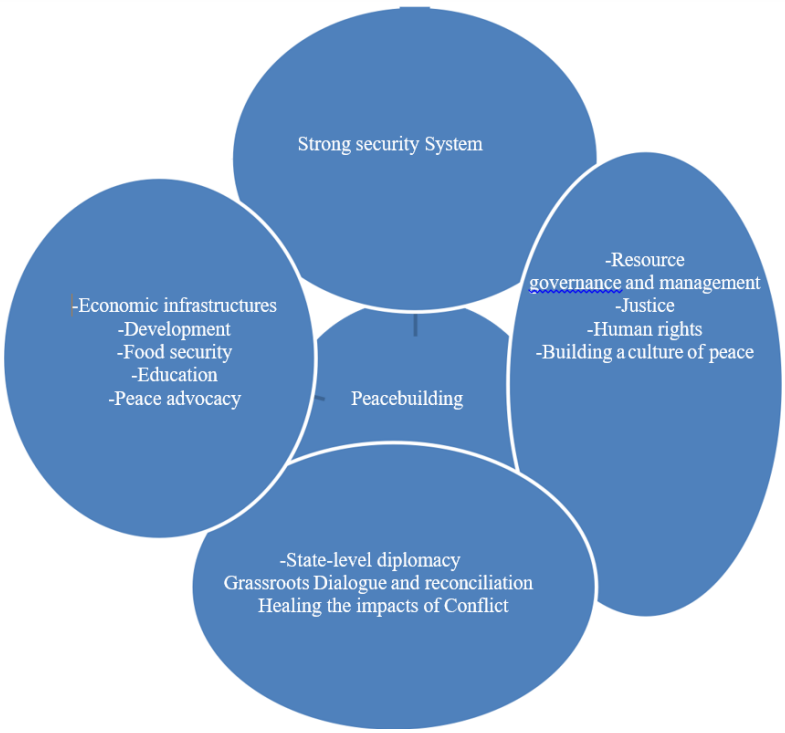

Figure 2: The above frame indicates the activities of peacebuilding which are taken in the study area

Peace needs to emerge organically from within society, addressing the multiple concerns and aspirations and seeking common ground so that all sectors feel invested in strategies, policies and mechanisms that offer the way forward to the grassroots community peace (Rahul, 2015). When well managed, natural resources can be a source of development, stability and peace. When mismanaged or misappropriated, they can have severely negative economic, social, and Environmental effects constitute conflict and violence, leading to a massive loss for peacebuilding and development. Development is critical to preventing both lapse and relapse into conflict, natural resource conflict. Human rights violations like killings of tribal members are also causes of conflict and must be addressed as early as possible to prevent resource conflicts.

4.2.5. Pastoralist and Agro-pastoralist Women in Peacebuilding

Women's peace leadership is important for conflict mitigation. Women are not always the victims of conflict, as the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) calls for enhanced involvement of women in conflict resolution processes is an indication of the significant role women play in conflict resolution and peacebuilding. These have resulted in a worldwide call to involve women in issues of peace and conflict as active participants (2000). The activity of peace building among the pastoralist communities in the study area is given to the elders, but nowadays there is an increasing involvement of other groups in the community, such as women and youth, in promoting peace (interview with the Zonal Peace and Militia Office, 2022). The committee is established to deal with conflict resolution within the community. Women helped their male counterparts to see things from a different perspective and the need to embrace dialogue in resolving inter- and intra-ethnic conflicts and cross-border conflicts. It shows that women are not only the part and victims of conflict, but also they are part of the solution in the study area.

Photo 4: Football sport held between the Kenyan and Ethiopian communities in the south of Omo, Ethiopia [*Source:* District/Woreda Government Communication Affairs Office, 2023]

4.2.6. Football Sport as a Pathway to Peacebuilding in Cross-Border Conflict and Internal Conflicts

People's cultural manifestations such as music, arts, poetry, and sports are a unifying factor and a point of commonality between peoples and cultures, Peace activity is being enhanced by the incorporation of these manifestations into formalized political and informal grassroots processes of peace building in pre- and post-conflict situations. Peace theorists indicated that building peace should not be an exclusive concern of political elites and the state military (Belay, 2004). Football is one of the types of sports used to create positive relationships in the study area community, and it is a mechanism planned by the government to increase communication and mutual

understanding (Interview with Woreda Peace and Militia Office, 2022). Peacebuilding through sports activities has emerged as a tool to engage community members to liberate their minds and encourage their imaginative power to fruitfully deal with situations of conflict and foster peace (Lederach, 1997; Belay, 2004). Sports are not just physical activity regulated by norms and rules, but rather, they are understood as a wider cultural expression that may bring people together by serving as a common denominator between communities who can, in the best case, actively mobilize in the name of peace (Giessmann, 2016).

5. The Challenges and Opportunities of Peacebuilding in the Study Area

5.1. Challenges of Peacebuilding in the Study Area

Peacebuilding in the study area continues to face challenges. The identified challenges in the study area are stated below:

a) Increased Competition for Resources

Competition over limited natural resources that include water and pasture, particularly in areas inhabited by pastoralists and semi-pastoralists, is a major factor that exacerbates conflicts. The absence of investment to create access to such types of resources is the main challenge to the practices of conflict transformation and peacebuilding in the area. The environmental change and poverty trigger the resource competition and conflict. In addition, the lack of capacity and skill of the regional, zonal, and Woreda state institutions in conflict management, resolution, prevention, peacebuilding and conflict transformation is also an additional cause of the continued conflict and conflict-related problems in the community.

b) Small Arms or Light Weapons

Based on the data taken from the South Omo Zone peace and militia office, trading in light weapons and using small arms are a common phenomenon and culture of the community in the study area. The community uses weapons for self-protection and to protect their ethnic groups from enemy attacks. The government has been taking decisions and action to stop the trade in small arms together with the community. The People get access to small arms from the states of Kenya and South Sudan. Particularly, the markets in the Kara community are well known for the trading of small arms and it distributed to the other parts of the country. The government did not control the trade in arms, and it is one of the challenges to peace and security in the study area.

c) Cross-Border Conflicts

Ethiopia and Kenya's cross-border conflicts have created an environment conducive to the outbreak of conflict and violence because of the ease of movement across borders to search for pasture and trade. Water, pasture, and fishing areas are the center of the conflicts. Peoples needs to share resources and control over such types of resources. The movement of people and animals across borders leads to disagreement due to a lack of pasture, water and fishing areas. The lack of security personnel in the border area led to feelings of insecurity among local populations, forcing them to take up arms to defend themselves against any attacks. The disagreement on resource sharing is the main challenge to peace. Lack of strong cooperation and coordination between the Ethiopian and Kenyan governments exacerbated the occurrence of cross-border resources-based conflicts between neighboring communities of Ethiopia and Kenya.

d) The Elders

The elders are drivers of peace and conflict in their ethnic group. They can stop any conflict or violence based on their culture. Again, they can also promote the youth to fight with others to get the needed resources. The old people usually do not abide by state laws, and they tend to be more intolerant and impatient in the absence of resources for their animals and people. The old people or elders promote the young

generation to the continuation of their legacy. Moreover, a lack of access to education among the young generation has also contributed to the intensification of conflicts in the study area.

e) The Culture of the Community

Individual behavior is shaped by community culture and norms. In almost all ethnic groups in the study area, killing for heroism and a culture of killing an enemy is highly praised and blessed. Those who were killed are decorated on their chest based on the tradition of the community. This culture of the community is a challenge to human rights protection and disrupts the peace of the other community. The community in the study area needs to keep the legacy of their forefathers and mothers. Elders also promote the youth to live based on their culture, get access to resources like water, pasture land, fishing, and flood retreat agriculture. The scarcity of resources and the disagreement over how to use it is the sources of conflict and a threat to peace.

6. The Opportunities of Peacebuilding in the Study Area

There are opportunities for peacebuilding in the study area. The following are the identified opportunities based on the collected data:

- The formal and informal education is also seen as an opportunity to contribute to the erosion of interest in conflict among pastoralists, especially among the youth. There is a little change in behavior among the youth pastoralist community. Through time, people develop the culture of peace because of the influence of education.
- Diversification of livelihoods in addition to pastoralism in some areas of the study area is observed to reduce conflict on pasture and water. Engaging in rain-fed agriculture and using irrigation for crop production is the best opportunity to change the conflict situation in the study area.
- The existence of peace and militia offices for the promotion of peace and security in the conflict-ridden areas is another opportunity for peacebuilding. The local and zonal offices are working together with the conflict early warning and response offices to prevent conflicts.
- The political development of self-administration is also a good opportunity to govern them in a way that participate in the decisions and policy-making process of the government in related to the peacebuilding strategy of the state.
- Strengthening the indigenous system of conflict resolution in each ethnic group of the study area community plays a significant role in the peacebuilding practices, even if it never makes a lasting solution to peace. It creates a pathway for peacebuilding intervention.
- The last but not the least opportunity identified by the researcher is the indirect conflict intervention made by Governmental, NGOs, and intergovernmental organizations. They contribute a lot to education and development, which directly and indirectly creates a peaceful way of life in the community.

7. Conclusions

Peaceful co-existence for sharing or controlling resources is the dream of the pastoralist and agro-pastoralist community in the study area. The multiple approaches of peacebuilding are practiced to reduce conflict and to sustain peace among the community, but are not fully effective in creating peace. The conflict dynamics are now reduced, and there is relative peace, but the conflict situation is seasonal. The conflict increased in dry sessions when the amount of water and pasture is reduced. The role of the local government, peace committees, International organizations, intergovernmental organizations, and NGOs are significant to mitigate conflicts in the study area. Moreover, tribal leaders, as part of the customary institutions, played a

very important role in preserving and building peace among the community and for cross-border conflicts. The resource-based and use conflict is continued, and it needs a new creative mechanism to reduce it and to build peace. Turkana county leaders and the Dassanech, Hammer and Nyangatom Woreda of Ethiopia worked together to reduce conflict and violence, but they lack the coordination and cooperation to work together for peace. The researcher recommended that the two countries' governments should emphasize the prevention, management of resource-based conflicts and peacebuilding in general. The Governments and other bodies need to engage in conflict intervention mechanisms to create sustainable peace and to reduce the negative impacts of conflict. Furthermore, the government of Ethiopia should realize the formulated policy on peacebuilding and focus on conflict sensitivity in development projects in the area. Realizing peace leadership in the local context is also recommended as part of the ongoing peacebuilding activities.

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Author's Declarations and Essential Ethical Compliances

Authors' Contributions (in accordance with ICMJE criteria for authorship)
This article is 100% contributed by the sole author. He conceived and designed the research or analysis, collected the data, contributed to data analysis & interpretation, wrote the article, performed critical revision of the article/paper, edited the article, and supervised and administered the field work.

Funding
No funding is received for this study. It is part of my thesis conducted for the Master of Arts (MA) degree in Peace and Conflict Studies from Hawassa University.

Research involving human bodies or organs or tissues (Helsinki Declaration)
The author(s) solemnly declare(s) that this research has not involved any human subject (body or organs) for experimentation. It was not a clinical research. The contexts of human population/participation were only indirectly covered through literature review. Therefore, an Ethical Clearance (from a Committee or Authority) or ethical obligation of Helsinki Declaration does not apply in cases of this study or written work.

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The author(s) solemnly declare(s) that this research has not involved any animal subject (body or organs) for experimentation. The research was not based on laboratory experiment involving any kind animal. The contexts of animals were only indirectly covered through literature review. Therefore, an Ethical Clearance (from a Committee or Authority) or ethical obligation of ARRIVE does not apply in cases of this study or written work.

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The author(s) solemnly declare(s) that this research has not involved the plants for experiment and field studies. Some contexts of plants are also indirectly covered through literature review. Thus, during this research the author(s) obeyed the principles of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention on the Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.

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The author(s) has/have NOT complied with PRISMA standards. It is not relevant in case of this study or written work.

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Author(s) has/have no competing financial, professional, or personal interests from other parties or in publishing this manuscript. There is no conflict of interest with the publisher or the editorial team or the reviewers.

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